

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 3 are amended. Claim 4 is added. No new matter is added. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Request for Interview

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner grant a personal interview to Applicants' representatives prior to issuing the next Office Action.

The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 4,462,656 to Beyer. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "wherein the common grounding portion is arranged to be protruded outward from the connector housing at a location separate from the connecting portions." Support for the feature may be found in the drawings and in the original specification. For example, specific support may be found at page 3, lines 15-22 and Figs. 1-3 and 6. Applicants respectfully submit that Beyer does not disclose, teach or suggest such a feature.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the applied art. Claims 2 - 4 depend from independent claim 1, respectively, and are likewise patentably distinguishable over the applied art for at least their dependence on allowable base claims, as well as for additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Support for new claim 4 may be found in the drawings and in the original specification. For example, specific support for claim 4 may be found in Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 6

and at page 10, line 22 through page 11, line 2. As described, the feature recited in claim 4 allows the common grounding portion to be fixed once to a grounding member in order for the ground joint connector to offer grounding connections to a plurality of ground wires. By offering a plurality of grounding connections the ground joint connector allows ground wires from different wiring groups to be connected in an efficient work order.

* * * *

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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